

A QUEER EXPERIENCE

Alma-Tadema's Miraculous Escape From Death.

FREAKS OF AN EXPLOSION.

The Artist's House Was Wrecked, and How He Got Out Alive and Uninjured Is a Mystery—The Puzzle of the Staircase and Hallway.

In 1874 a canalboat carrying a hundred barrels of gunpowder along the Regent's park canal in London exploded just opposite the magnificent house of Laurence Alma-Tadema, the famous artist, across the road. This happened at 4 o'clock on a rainy morning. Every window in London within a radius of a mile was smashed, and the houses in the immediate vicinity, though solidly built of brick and stone, were wrecked.

"I was sound asleep in bed at the time," said Alma-Tadema, "and the first I knew of the explosion was when I found myself standing out on the sidewalk in front of my house in the rain, with my pajamas on and bare feet. How I got there I never know. The entire top of the brick wall in front of the lawn before my house was blown off, and the front of the house itself was as if driven in by the blow of a giant's fist.

"The canalboat, we found out afterward, had blown up underneath a solid bridge that crossed the canal at that point. Had it not been for that my house and the others near it would have been utterly knocked to pieces. It was fortunate, too, that there was no one on the street at the time. Had the explosion occurred in the daytime hundreds of persons might have been killed or maimed.

"But the strangest episode connected with the event concerned the man whose duty it was to keep watch on the bridge during the night. His name was Peter Knox. He was thirty-seven years old, married and had two children. I knew the fellow and had often chatted with him on the bridge. The day before the explosion he had arranged with a friend of his to come at 4 o'clock and relieve him. It was a Saturday, and he wanted to take his wife and children a little trip down to Bushey park on the Thames, and he wished to get to his home in east London in time so as to have breakfast and be off early on Sunday morning.

"Well, as 4 o'clock drew near, Peter, so he told me afterward, began to feel anxious lest his friend should have forgotten the appointment. He paced up and down the bridge and looked up the street, but the morning was so dark and misty with the rain that he could see only a short distance. A few minutes before 4, he said, he noticed a line of canalboats come slowly down toward the bridge, but paid no special attention to them.

"Just before the first boat passed under the bridge he stepped off it, though in doing so he was infringing the regulations, and sauntered up the street in the direction from which he expected his friend to appear. He had gone about forty yards when the explosion took place, and when he turned not a brick of the bridge was left. If he had been less impatient or if his friend had been more prompt, one or both of them would never have been seen or heard of again.

"But my own little adventure was singular enough. As I said, I was not conscious of having been awakened by the explosion, still less of having got out of bed, come downstairs, opened the front door and stepped out to the sidewalk. The shock had knocked all memory of these acts out of my head, and I have never recovered it.

"But what puzzled me most was the condition of things I found when I went back into the house. The hall was a mass of wreckage, and the staircase from top to bottom was covered with pieces of broken glass, sharp as razors and so distributed that I found it impossible to ascend without a light to show me where not to tread.

"Nevertheless I had come down those same stairs, with my eyes shut or unseeing, and had never so much as scratched my bare feet. The thing was impossible, and yet I had done it. I had been skeptical about miracles before that, but since then I have been both a believer and an evangelist."—Chicago Record-Herald.

BUYING THE WIND.

Iceland "Wizards" Who Used to Sell to Superstitious Mariners.

In the old days of sailing ships it was a common thing for a sea captain to "buy the wind" for his voyage, though, strangely enough, the only people supposed to deal in it were the Icelanders. When a constant succession of baffling winds or dead calms had persistently followed a ship for more than one cruise, it was not at all unusual for the skipper of a big wind-jammer to pay a visit to Iceland for the sole purpose of purchasing wind enough to last him on his next voyage or two.

In every port in Iceland one or more "wind wizards" were to be found, who were ready to sell a favorable wind for the next six months or a year to any sea captain willing to invest in something he could not see. The sailor, having found his way to the magician's house, first proceeded to spread out upon the floor the articles offered in payment for the wind—tallow candles, cloth, beads, knives, powder and lead. After a good deal of haggling and many times adding to or taking away from the little pile of merchandise between them the price was finally agreed upon, and the captain passed over his handkerchief to the Icelandic.

The wind merchant muttered certain words into it, tying a knot in the handkerchief at the end of each incantation. This was done to keep the magic words from evaporating. When a certain number of knots had been tied, the handkerchief was returned to its owner, with a strict charge to keep it knotted and guard it with extraordinary care until he arrived at the desired port, and at each port a knot was to be taken out.

One old captain had been so bothered with head winds that he kept crying out to the Icelandic to tie another knot in the handkerchief and another and another, so as to be sure of plenty of the wished for zephyrs, until finally there was no room for any more knots and three knives and thirty candles had been added to the heap on the floor. But when the wind greedy captain was two days at sea a terrific gale began to hurl the ship ahead of it, ever increasing in fury, until she plunged along under bare poles, with her nose deep in the brine and tons of water washing her decks. Darker and darker grew the sky, and higher and higher rose the racing, foam crested waves, hammering the laboring vessel with ceaseless blows until her seams began to open under the strain and let in the sea.

Then, believing he had the devil in his pocket, the badly frightened skipper drew forth the much knotted handkerchief and threw it overboard. In a short time the tempest abated, the clouds cleared away, and the waters subsided, but one seaman never again bought wind. He was content with the kind that comes by chance.—New York Times.

French Oyster Gatherers.

The work of oyster collecting and culture is most unsuitable for women, but in France, owing to its tedious nature, it does not appeal to men. Often from an early hour in the morning till late into the evening the women are standing up to the knees in water, with a strong sun beating down on them. The result is that never a year passes without some of them going mad and having to be hurried away to the asylums. The work is well paid, as, indeed, it ought to be, while in the case of the few who own beds the profits are large, and small fortunes are quickly amassed.

Hopptity Hop.

Are you just barely getting around by the aid of crutches or a cane? Unless you have lost a limb or have a deformity—if your trouble is rheumatism, lumbago, sprain, stiff joints, or anything of like nature use Ballard's Snow Liniment and in no time you can throw away your crutches and be as well as anyone. Price 25c, 50c and \$1. Sold by W. M. Johnson.

His Quietus.

The bridegroom relaxed for a moment his arm's tense pressure. "What would you do," he whispered hoarsely, "if by some terrible accident I should be drowned?" In the mild moonlight he saw his young wife pale and shudder. "Oh, don't, Tom!" she cried. "How can you? You know I don't look well in black."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Not Impressed.

"I have been abroad in the best of society," boasted the city youth. "Why, even my trunks bear the labels of Switzerland." "Gosh, that ain't nothing, sonny," drawled his rural uncle. "So does a box of cheese."—Chicago News.

Quick Relief for Asthma Sufferers.

Foley's Honey and Tar affords immediate relief to asthma sufferers in the worst stages and if taken in time will effect a cure. J. W. McCollem & Co.

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An Irishman entered a country inn and called for a glass of the best Irish whisky. After being supplied he drank it and was about to walk out when the following conversation took place: Landlord—Here, sir; you haven't paid for that whisky you ordered. Irishman—What's that you say? Landlord—I said you hadn't paid for that whisky you ordered. Irishman—Did you pay for it? Landlord—Of course I did. Irishman—Well, then, what's the good of both of us paying for it?—London Tit-Bits.

The Swiss Republic.

The Swiss republic, with various changes, has survived from the year 1303, though its present constitution dates only from 1874. It now embraces three nationalities—German, French and Italian. The original nucleus of the state, however, was German, and even now considerably more than half the population is German. Federated under the constitution of 1874 are twenty-two distinct states.

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He Preferred One Girl.

When J. M. Barrie, the author of "Peter Pan," addressed an audience of a thousand girls at Smith college during his American visit of last year, a friend asked him how he had found the experience.

"Well," replied Mr. Barrie, "to tell you the truth, I'd much rather talk a thousand times to one girl than to talk one time to a thousand girls."

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CROPS GROW WITHOUT RAIN.

How the Syrian Peasant Makes Use of the Moist Subsoil.

In Syria and Palestine from the beginning of April until October there is practically no rain, yet in July the fields teem with a vigorous growth of watermelons, tomatoes, cucumbers, etc., all flourishing without artificial watering, although at that time no rain has fallen for many weeks.

In fact, the Syrian peasant from the moment his seed has been sown prays that no rain may fall. During the period of growth of a crop the surface of the soil to a depth of six or eight inches is perfectly dry and loose. Below this surface layer will be found moist soil, in which the roots extend and grow vigorously. In this moist subsoil plants continue to grow until late autumn. When the crop is removed in the autumn the rains commence, and the land is plowed after each heavy rain as soon as the soil begins to dry.

Two primary objects are kept in view in plowing—to furnish a favorable surface for taking up all the water and to prevent its upward evaporation from the subsoil. The great point is to keep the upper six inches of soil perfectly loose and friable, so that the moisture from below is not drawn upward and lost in evaporation, but does not ascend higher than the compact subsoil that is not broken up by the plow. For this reason the plowing is shallow, averaging from four to six inches in depth.

When the time for sowing the seed arrives the land is plowed to a depth of about six inches and the seed is sown from an arrangement attached to the plow, falls on the damp subsoil and is covered by the soil closing over behind the plowshare. From this time the upper stratum of loose soil prevents the escape of moisture upward beyond the wet subsoil on which the seeds rest and into which their roots after the process of germination spread.—Chicago Tribune.

Have You a Baby?

Then watch it closely. And above all things don't let it suffer for any length of time with worms—that is fatal. If its complexion gets yellow and pasty, if it is listless, cross or peevish, gets thin, suffers with flatulence, give it White's Cream Vermifuge. The only cure that never fails and has no bad effects. Sold by W. M. Johnson.

17TH ANNUAL MEETING.

Convention of the Concatenated Order of Hoo Hoo.

Chicago, Aug. 10.—The Concatenated Order of Hoo Hoo, a fraternal lodge of the National Lumbermen's association, began its seventeenth annual convention here Wednesday, with impressive ceremonies.

The dates for the beginning of the three days' convalescence were chosen with an eye to mysticism, being the ninth day of the ninth month at 9:09 o'clock a. m. The attendance was in the neighborhood of fifteen hundred. The feature of the gathering will be the "embalming" on Friday of past supreme snark, John S. Bonner, of Houston, Tex., who by virtue of the ceremony will be given the degree of Mummy and will become a deified member of the ancient house.

A Burglar in Town.

His name is "bad cough." He doesn't care for gold or silver but he will steal your health away. If he appears in your house arrest him at once with Ballard's Horehound Syrup—it may mean consumption if you don't. A cure for all coughs, colds and chest troubles. Price 25c, 50c and \$1 per bottle. Sold by W. M. Johnson.

Second Primary in Carolina.

Columbia, S. C., Sept. 10.—The second democratic primary to nominate a United States senator, railroad commissioner and state superintendent of education and congressmen from the fifth and sixth districts was held Tuesday. So far the returns indicate that E. D. Smith, field agent of the Southern Cotton association, has been nominated to succeed Senator Frank B. Gary. Candler, for railroad commissioner, has a good lead over Caughman, incumbent, and Swearingen, for superintendent of education, is leading Mellichamp by over 4,000 votes.

Millions of bottles of Foley's Honey and Tar have been sold without any person ever having experienced any other than beneficial results from its use for coughs, colds and lung trouble. This is because the genuine Foley's Honey and Tar in the yellow package contains no opiates or other harmful drugs. Guard your health by refusing any but the genuine. J. W. McCollem & Co.

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SCARED INTO FITS

And howling for help, two foolish persons about to lose their all by fire. Don't pity 'em. They're probably sneered at their neighbors for "paying out" an annual premium on a policy for

FIRE INSURANCE.

Our scared friends are getting their little lesson as they yell. Too late—till next time. How about your insurance? Is force? Note the date of your policy, and don't let it lapse. A post, will bring our representative and you lose no time. Be wise today—you may be burned out tomorrow.

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